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AUTHOR Shuman, R. Baird
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ABSTRACT

Focusing primarily on the doctorate in English education, this paper explores existing opportunities for the English educator outside the conventional area of teachers training. In spite of a constricted job market, alternatives do exist to reduction or abandonment of doctoral programs in English education. Teachers without terminal degrees can be recruited into doctoral programs, thus upgrading their present positions rather than seeking new jobs. People doing advanced work in English education can qualify for jobs in community colleges, in continuing-education programs, in state departments of public instruction, in penal-institution education programs, in foreign teaching service, and in the publishing industry. Faced with such opportunities, an English education doctoral candidate should be equipped with a broad-based educational background, with components of writing and language skills, as well as with depth of understanding in a particular field. The content of a doctoral program should be individualized to match as closely as possible the interests, abilities, backgrounds, and aims of each student involved in a doctoral program in English education. (RL)

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DOCTORAL DEGREES AND ENGLISH EDUCATION

R. Baird Shuman

Specialization in the unique and relatively new field of English education usually occurs at the doctoral level, although candidates for the degrees of Master of Arts (A.M.), Master of Education (Ed.M.), and Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) often pursue programs which prove complementary to doctoral programs in English education. Some schools offer master's degree programs which prepare their students to serve as English supervisors or curriculum planners. This paper, however, will focus primarily on the English education doctorate.

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

The Doctor of Philosophy has traditionally been a research-oriented degree. People pursuing programs in English education would normally seek this degree if they envision as their future work college or university teaching, research and writing. While the potential Ph.D. in English education should have had exposure to teaching in the schools, his scholarly concerns may sometimes be highly theoretical, perhaps to the point that his ideas will require translation by practitioners close to the schools before they can be of any practical and immediate use to teachers in the classroom.

R. Baird Shuman is Professor of English and Director of English Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana. He has taught in the Philadelphia Public Schools as well as at the University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, California State University at San José and Duke University. He holds the Ph.D. in English from the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of over 250 articles and of eight books, the most recent of which is Questions English Teachers Ask (Rochelle Park, NJ: Hayden Publishers, 1977).

CS 203 530

The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)

Theoretically, the degree of Doctor of Education, and such variations of it as the Doctor of Arts degree, is a practitioner's degree. Its recipient often will not be a researcher in the way that the person with a Ph.D. is. Rather the Doctor of Education might be a curriculum planner, a writer of textbooks, a designer of media programs, or a supervisor in a school district. Such a person would work closely with school teachers and administrators, whereas the holder of a Ph.D. would typically work more closely in teacher training programs at the college or university level. In actuality, the situation is not so clearly defined as this, nor is it necessarily desirable that it should be.

Training for What?

Those who would plan graduate curricula for students in English education need to have a realistic view of what sort of work their students might ultimately end up doing. As obvious as this statement might seem, some educators involved in designing such programs think of the doctorate, be it the Ph.D. or the Ed.D., primarily as a passport into college or university teaching. Given this sort of expectation in the face of a constricted job market and a much-touted oversupply of people with doctorates some schools are considering restricting or abandoning completely their doctoral programs in English education. However, reasonable alternatives to such drastic courses as this exist and need to be explored constantly by graduate professors of English education.

Upgrading Teachers in the Field

The first means of preserving English education programs at the doctoral level seems an obvious one: Actively recruit teachers from elementary and

secondary schools as well as teachers from higher institutions who do not have terminal degrees, who have a interest in earning them, and who, either through working part time on their doctoral studies or through completing the course work for such studies during leaves of absence, would not necessarily be seeking new jobs at the completion of their doctoral programs. Rather they would have jobs to return to and they would be much upgraded in these jobs, having earned doctoral degrees.

In order for this first option to work, some schools would have to relax residence requirements for those who continue working at their jobs during their doctoral work. But it must be remembered that for those pursuing the professional degree (Ed.D.), this makes very good sense, just as it makes very good sense for candidates for the M.D. to be around hospitals as much as possible in the course of their training. To those who view an Ed.D. earned by people who continue teaching during their course work as a watered-down degree, I would suggest that professional degrees <u>are</u> practitioner's degrees and that work in the field must be a component of their programs, which will also include considerable theoretical work.

Those who earn doctoral credit while they are on leave from their regular jobs must be offered programs which can fit into a reasonable time frame. In order that this objective be achieved, some schools will have to alter current practices. For example, if previous graduate work, let us say work done for a master's degree, becomes outdated for purposes of transfer in under seven or eight years, thought will have to be given to altering this regulation, primarily because typical faculty members at any level earn

sabbatical leaves after six or seven years of service. If people on sabbatical leaves put in their year of residence for a degree only to find that their transfer credit is outdated, they will not likely proceed with doctoral studies. I feel that any graduate level work earned at an accredited higher institution and carrying a grade of "B" or above should be transferrable into one's doctoral program for up to ten years after its completion provided that the person requesting transfer has taught or been an administrator in some educational institution for at least five of the preceding ten years. The experience they gain on the job is invaluable to them; and, while I do not advocate allowing academic credit directly for work experience, I would suggest that it is perfectly reasonable and appropriate to moderate some of the academic requirements for one who has been so employed.

Faculty must also assume responsibility for dealing with student work, particularly at the dissertation stage, with sufficient dispatch that students are not delayed for undue periods awaiting faculty reaction to what they have written and submitted for consideration. I promise my doctoral candidates that I will return to them all written work pertaining to their dissertations within forty-eight hours of its reaching my hands. I emphasize that if I am absent from town on professional business, something might wait on my desk for a week. However, from the time I actually receive it until the time it is available for return to the student, no more than forty-eight hours elapse. Reading and commenting on the written work of students writing dissertations is a top priority item for me, displacing any other work which I may have to do.

I also urge my students to focus on a dissertation topic early in their programs so that they can begin the research early and so that they may do term papers related to the topic which they will ultimately be writing on.

Expanding the Field

People doing advanced work in English education qualify admirably for many important positions other than those in college or university teaching. But even within the boundaries of college and university teaching, those who hold doctorates in English education can make important inroads into teaching fields other than those usually associated with teacher training. For example, directors or coördinators of freshman composition in large English departments might well hold English education doctorates. Such people would very well be able to turn the freshman composition program into a more valuable training ground for English graduate students than it usually is at present. Ideally, those teaching freshman composition as graduate assistants should be taking a course entitled "Teaching English at the College Level" during their initial teaching experiences, and this course would ideally be offered by someone with a degree in English education and with a background in teaching college level English.

One growth area in education is that of the community college. People with doctorates in English education, particularly those whose master's degrees are in English, should be very desirable additions to the English departments of such schools. Their courses in teaching techniques and previous teaching experience in the schools should give them a teaching advantage over the straight English Ph.D.

English education can also provide coördinators for the expanding continuing education programs which are gaining increased popularity across the country. A student interested in this sort of work would necessarily elect to take some courses in higher education and some in school administration as preparation for administering a continuing education program.

Some state departments of public instruction are becoming increasingly consultative rather than merely regulatory. As this encouraging trend grows, so will the need for personnel, many of whom can enter such work by way of English education. English education graduates who have pursued considerable work in the teaching of reading will also be able to render valuable services to school districts and to state agencies both as full time employees and as part time consultants.

One official goal of the Federal Prison System is to overcome illiteracy among inmates. One can think of few people better qualified by their training to set up such educational programs in English education. Such people might also do a great deal to offer instruction in basic skills in mental institutions and in state training facilities, where many inmates are virtually illiterate.

Foreign teaching opportunities for those with English education doctorates are also rather promising, particularly for those who have had training in linguistics and/or in the teaching of English as a second language. People with such training can also work effectively in this country on Indian reservations or in urban centers where large concentrations of non-native speakers are enrolled.

Training in English education can provide a fine background for work in the publishing industry, particularly in houses which emphasize the publishing of textbooks. Companies producing media might find that people trained in English education can work imaginatively in various areas of media production.

Components of an English Education Program

The recipient of a degree in English education should have a broad background in English, American, and foreign literatures. Such a background can be achieved both through course work and independent reading. For the English educator, breadth is more important than depth, although depth of understanding in some literary period and in some literary genre is important. An understanding of the techniques of literary criticism is also indispensible.

Those working to design programs in English education must constantly remind themselves that English teachers are not, ideally, merely teachers of literature, even though most present-day English teachers are much better trained in literature than they are in other areas of the English curriculum. In order to work toward overcoming the usual disbalance that one finds in the preparation of those teaching English, program designs should incorporate work in writing--specifically in advanced expository writing, creative writing, and journalism--and work in language--some course work in history of the language, in present-day English, in dialectology, and in semantics. A course in present-day English might stress these last two components.

Supplemental to this, a strong English education program might well include two workshop type experiences, one in writing and one in educational drama and improvisation. The former might be tied in with a course offered for those teaching freshman composition. The latter might be an offering of a speech and drama department rather than of an English department and might touch on the development of speaking and listening skills.

People working in today's schools need to know something about race and culture, something about deviant social behavior, something about social work, something about recent psychological theory (particularly about hemisphericity), and something about many other areas of study carried on by a broad range of departments within a university. I would hope that doctoral candidates in English education might have available to them each semester at least one Chautauqua type course which would expose them each week to someone in another discipline than English or education who is doing significant work that has implications for English education. Nothing is more intellectually broadening than cross-disciplinary work of this sort.

An adequately trained English educator should have had formal instruction in methods of teaching literature, language, and composition. Such a person should also have had at least one course in the teaching of English as a second language and three courses in the teaching of reading, at least one of which would stress the psycholinguistic aspects of reading instruction and one of which would involve a teaching or tutorial practicum. For many, elective courses in school administration or leadership would provide valuable background for some types of positions which might be available to them. A course in comparative education would be useful to those who might

wish to teach abroad, and at least one course in school law, particularly as it relates to questions of censorship and student rights, would provide strong background for one who might be planning a career as an English supervisor in a school district.

Some of the course work suggested here would have been a part of the student's undergraduate or master's degree program, so the number of courses required should not be unwieldy.

The English Education Doctorate at Duke University

At this point it might be informative to examine the graduates of a doctoral program which has produced nine Doctors of Education and twelve Doctors of Philosophy in English education over an eleven year period. At the time that the first doctorate in this speciality was awarded to a Duke University student, the only doctoral degree in Education was the Ed.D. Four students passed through the program before the Ph.D. in Education became available.

Of the twenty-one people who passed through the program between 1965 and 1976, fourteen are presently college or university teachers, and one is an Associate Professor of English Emeritus from a major public university. Four of those currently teaching in colleges or universities have also held or now hold major administrative appointments in their institutions. One of these is serving both as the Chairperson of an English Department and as Associate Dean of a large foreign university.

Of the four students who were awarded Doctor of Education degrees before the Ph.D. was available in Education, two hold joint appointments as Associate Professors of English and Education at a large public university, one is

Professor of English at a large public university, and one is Professor of English at a private university of moderate size. Of the five who opted for Ed.D. degrees after the Ph.D. was available, one is an Assistant Professor of Education at a medium size public university, one is an Assistant Professor of Education at a small private university, one is the Director of Media for a large school of education in a major university, one is a high school English teacher, and one is an elementary school langauge arts teacher.

Of the twelve who completed the Ph.D., six teach in large public universities, one of which is in a foreign country. One has retired from the English department of a large public university. Four of the six presently teaching have their primary appointments in English departments; two hold appointments in education. One Ph.D. has left a position in a small private college to return to high school teaching. One is a member of an English Department in a large, publicly supported community college. One is the chairperson of an English department in a private, residential secondary school, and one is a teacher of English in a U.S. Dependents' School on a military base. One is the Director of the Division of Languages of a large state department of public instruction. One of the six Ph.D. recipients who teaches English in a large public university is also the associate chairperson of a high school English department.

It is clear that for the typical person receiving a doctorate in English education from Duke University, the degree has led to positions in college or university teaching. Sixteen of twenty-one people receiving the doctorate are now in college teaching or have been since the degree was

awarded. Six are now teaching at some pre-collegiate level, although two of these have held college teaching posts since receiving the degree and one is doing college teaching as well as high school teaching.

Conclusions

This survey of my own students leads me to conclude that people who have taken doctorates in English education often end up as college or university teachers. Such a conclusion might lead one to the further conclusion that, because of the shortage of jobs, enrollments in English education programs at the doctoral level should be reduced. However, I am led rather to the conclusion that professors of English education should on the one hand seek to recruit from within the profession those who will have jobs to return to on the completion of their university work and on the other hand to explore as aggressively as possible the opportunities that exist for English educators outside the conventional area of teacher training.

English education is a significant field unto itself. It is neither English nor education, nor should it be a carpicious melding of the two fields. Within the purview of English education as I conceive it, comes exposure to such specialized areas as sociology, psychology, linguistics, logic, aesthetics, and teaching English as a second language.

As school populations grow increasingly diverse, it is the English educator more than the English specialist or academician who can find unique [illegible]ans of reaching community college students as well as college freshman and sophomores. In working with the latter and with those who teach them, the English educator can also do a great deal to help train prospective college English teachers in pedagogical skills which are now

severely lacking in many who engage in college or university teaching. Graduate assistants direly need a course which focuses on methods of teaching college English if for no other reason than to learn something about testing and other evaluative techniques and to be exposed to learning theory, a knowledge of which might drastically influence the way in which they present their material to students.

The differences between the Ph.D. and the Ed.D. in English education may be defined for the purposes of a college catalogue; however, in actuality, the recipient of either degree has essentially the same employment opportunities open to him. Even where clear distinctions are made, these distinctions will be known largely within the university departments offering the degrees. My feeling is that probably the major difference between the Ph.D. and the Ed.D. should be that the former requires a year of residence while the latter can be done while the candidate remains on the job. I make the further distinction of asking that my Ph.D. candidates have had some exposure to one Romance language, one Germanic language other than English, and one non-Indo-European language. Nevertheless, many Ed.D. programs will be virtually identical to Ph.D. programs in English education. Probably the name of the degree has less importance than the content of the program which led to it; and each program should be individualized to match as closely as possible the interests, abilities, backgrounds, and aims of each student involved in a doctoral program in English education.